



North Country Middle School Film Festival



2011-2012

Our World, Our Fate:

A true idea doesn't end thought, it activates it!

The film must relate to an **environmental topic** that fits the theme, Our World, Our Fate. This can be on a local, national or global level. Need an example, here is a 2 minute public service announcement on bottled water <http://vimeo.com/1855327>

Eligibility

Open to New Hampshire students in grades 6, 7 & 8 from schools in SAUs 3, 7, 9, 20, 23, 35, 36, 58, 68, 77 & 84 and Vermont schools in SUs 19 & 21. For K-6 schools, you may include grade 5 students on the team if necessary.

Teams

A team size is recommended to be 2 to 5 students. The minimum is 2 students, the maximum can be set by the adult team supervisor. The team can consist of any combination of grade 6, 7 & 8 students (and 5th graders for schools that only go through 6th grade). There is no limit on the number of teams per school, however, only one video submission per team will be accepted.

Registration

The adult team supervisor must register team(s) with Lori Langlois at NCES by January 6, 2012 (registration form follows). Please submit the number of students and grades levels on each team to help us plan accordingly. There will be permission forms sent to the team supervisor for parents to complete when the films are submitted.

Deadline

Entries (DVD with completed Entry Form) must be postmarked (or hand delivered by 4:00 PM) on or before Thursday, February 16, 2012 to Lori Langlois, Film Festival Entry, North Country Education Services, 300 Gorham Hill Road, Gorham, NH 03581. Late entries will not be considered for awards. The review of videos will begin on one week following the deadline to allow for postal delivery. NCES is not responsible for video arriving later than one week due to postal or carrier delays.

Film/Video Requirements

The actual video production and editorial decisions must be made by the students. Entries must have a run time of **no longer than 2 minutes** including the credits. An Entry Form (will be available closer to deadline) must be submitted with each entry. All talent appearing in the film must sign (parent signature for minors) a Talent Media Consent and Release Form. Students may use whatever software, hardware and equipment they have available, but the final entry must be submitted to play on a DVD player. NCES can provide you with a link to free video conversion sites so you can save the final version for the proper format. Please make sure your DVD works in a standard DVD player and not just in the computer you used to create it. Play it before mailing! The entire production must be the work of the student team entering the competition. There is no age limit for actors, documentary subjects, or musicians who may appear in the production. There may be a requirement for uploading videos to YouTube or other hosting platforms.

NCES reserves the right to disqualify a film from nomination for failure to utilize a tripod for shots that should have been steady or because of poor sound/audio quality (some audio could barely be heard at the last year's festival).

Films should conform to a "G" (preferably) or "PG" rating as described by the Motion Picture Association of America: <http://www.mpa.org/ratings/what-each-rating-means>

Films should NOT include student last names (or not real last names) within the film itself including the credits

Whenever possible, students should use original music, copyright free music, or music they have obtained permission to use. A handy reference on Fair Use Guidelines for Educational Use.: <http://www.umuc.edu/library/libhow/copyright.cfm#whatis>

This festival is an educational event and we encourage teachers, artists, and advisors to work with their students.

See the tips section for additional suggestions.

Categories*

In general, judges will consider the following elements:

1. Originality – uniqueness of the work
2. Technical merit – assesses lighting, sound quality, image quality
3. Execution – overall quality of components, including, but not limited to, acting, use of props and setting, where applicable
4. Audience appeal – how well the work engages the audience

Best Picture

All of the elements of the film bring a powerful emotional impact that convincingly conveys the message of the film and leaves a lasting impression.

Best Cinematography

The overall visual impact of the film: lighting, composition, photography/videography and framing of the film contribute to an overall dramatic effect that sends a compelling message.

Best Editing

Assembles a variety of film components (smooth transitions, steady shots, balanced sound) skillfully to facilitate the telling of a compelling story or message.

Best Sound

The choice of music and sound effects, sound levels, and sound elements (music choice, sound effects, voiceover, dialogue and mixing) help convey the message of the film.

Best Creativity

The content of the film demonstrates original thinking or a unique presentation of a concept or idea.

Best Performance

The actor(s) remain in character, are believable and overall play their role(s).

Best Props & Set Design

Authentic props are utilized and the setting is appropriate for the content of the film.

Best Animation

At least 30 seconds of the film must be animated in order to qualify for this category. Hand-drawn, paper-cut out, computer, clay, and puppet animation are all acceptable.

*Awards may not be given in each category depending on the number and quality of the submissions.

Prizes

Cash and/or prizes, valued up to \$1,000, will be awarded to winning teams. Prizes are intended for school related use.

Adult Team Supervisor

There are stipends available to adult team supervisors. There is a fixed amount of funding for stipends, so in order to be fair, we are starting with the amounts below. Should we have fewer teams, we may be able to adjust the stipend amount upwards.

- If the team is making the video primarily during school hours, the supervisor stipend is \$75/team.
- If the team is making the video primarily as an after-school project, the supervisor stipend is \$150/team.

In either case, the maximum stipend per school is \$300 regardless of the number of teams. If you are willing to supervise additional teams without a stipend, that is at your discretion.

Supervisors must be a member of the staff at the team's school. The supervisor does not necessarily need to be skilled in making videos since this is a student production.

Equipment

Though we were able to provide some equipment last year, we are unable to provide it this year. Please contact Lori Langlois if your team needs to borrow a HD hand-held camcorder or shot-gun style boom microphone. A limited amount equipment is available and will be loaned on a first come, first serve basis. You may use whatever equipment, hardware and software you have available.

Film Festival: Public Screening & Awards

The tentative date for the festival is Saturday, March 24, 2012. We will, however, poll team supervisors about the possibility of holding the event on a weeknight. We want to maximize attendance and are open to suggestions. Location is yet to be determined. Only films nominated in each category will be shown. Parents and families are welcome to attend (an invitation will be provided by NCES). Transportation will not be provided. Teams do not need to be present to receive an award.

Note: NCES reserves the right to exclude any film from the competition without explanation (for example, content deemed inappropriate, failure to use a tripod or inadequate sound levels). NCES reserves the right to notify registered adult team supervisors of any changes to these guidelines or overall program.

Contact

Film festival coordinator: Lori Langlois, lori@ncedservices.org, 603-466-5437.



300 Gorham Hill Road, Gorham, NH 03584
www.ncedservices.org

Sponsorship

This film festival is brought to you by North Country Education Services in Gorham, NH with generous support from the Neil & Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and additional sponsorship from the Roy Foundation and George Wiley Consulting Group, Inc.

Archive

Information on the 2010 film festival, including links to the winning films, can be found here:

http://www.ncedservices.org/film/2010-11/2010_films.htm

Resources (suggestions only, feel free to use whatever you have available)

Free music and sound effects

<http://freeplaymusic.com/>

<http://www.freesound.org/>

Sound editing

Audacity 1.3.13 <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

Movie Making Software

If you have a Windows 7 computer, you may want to download the “old” version of MovieMaker as it gives more editing control than Windows Live MovieMaker. For Windows 7, the version would be MovieMaker 2.6 (it says for Vista, but it works with Windows 7 too) found here:

<http://www.microsoft.com/download/en/details.aspx?id=34>. If you have Windows XP, MovieMaker 2.1 is included in the XP Service Pack 2 or 3.

Stuck? Try searching YouTube or Google Video for a tutorial.

Support

NCES will host half-day sessions for teams in January. The school will be responsible for transportation. These are optional and space will be limited. More details to follow on these sessions.

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Team Registration Form

Due by January 6, 2012

School: _____

Team Supervisor: _____ Email: _____

Team Composition

A team size is recommended to be 2 to 5 students. The minimum is 2 students. The maximum can be set by the team supervisor. The team can consist of any combination of grade 6, 7 & 8 students (and 5th graders for schools that only go through 6th grade). There is no limit on the number of teams per school. However, **only one video submission per team will be accepted.**

	# of students?	Grade(s)?
Team 1		
Team 2		
Team 3		
Team 4		
Team 5		

	# of students?	Grade(s)?
Team 6		
Team 7		
Team 8		
Team 9		
Team 10		

These numbers can change, but please notify Lori Langlois of any significant changes so plans can be adjusted accordingly.

Supervisor Requirements and Stipends

There are stipends available for the team supervisor. There is a fixed amount of funding for stipends, so in order to be fair, we are starting with the amounts below. Should we have fewer teams, we may be able to adjust the stipend amount upwards.

- If the team is making the video primarily **during school hours**, the supervisor stipend is **\$75/team**.
- If the team is making the video primarily as an **after-school project**, the supervisor stipend is **\$150/team**.

In either case, the maximum stipend per school is \$300 regardless of the number of teams. If you are willing to supervise additional teams without a stipend, that is at your discretion. If there ends up being more than one team supervisor interested in participating from one school, we can try to work out multiple stipends dependent on the overall participation level.

The supervisor **must be a member of the staff** at the team's school. The supervisor does not necessarily need to be skilled in making videos since this is a student production.

Check one:

- The film(s) will be created as primarily an in-school/classroom project.
- The film(s) will be created as primarily an out-of-school/extra-curricular project.

Team Supervisor Signature: _____

Principal Signature: _____

Tips for the Film Festival

USE A TRIPOD. Unless you have to be moving alongside the action, you should ALWAYS use a tripod. If you need to roll along the action, try to devise a rolling cart to place the tripod on. Here's an example: <http://phototipspro.com/video-tools/movers-dolly/>

USE A MICROPHONE. Sound quality is important. You may capture great video, but if the audience cannot hear the dialogue or sound effects, the overall effect diminishes greatly. Audio can be a mix of student narration, interviews, and music. Narrators will be more successful if they enunciate and speak in measured tones. Soundtracks are best when relevant to content, and volume does not distract from the voiceover. When using interviews that are hard to understand, students may consider subtitles. Ask different people to listen to the video to make sure all types of people can understand the audio so that adjustments may be made before the final version. Audacity is a free audio editing software that can help with adding multiple layers of sound. We recommend downloading the beta version <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>. You can then search on YouTube for "how to use audacity" tutorials such as this one <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rQr5YVNqI0&feature=related>

STAY WITHIN THE TIME LIMIT. There is no penalty for videos under 2 minutes in length. Points will be deducted for every 10 seconds over the 2 minute maximum. Video exceeding by 30 seconds will be disqualified.

STORY-BOARD. Sketch, write and plan out all the details of your video before you start filming or assembling clips and photos. This includes writing and PRACTICING the dialogue. If you rehearse the lines ahead of time, you'll save a lot of time in the recording and editing.

WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE? Decide and clearly define the **one** message or point you want to convey to your audience in your video. You only have two minutes. You'll be most convincing if you stay focused on a specific point.

General suggestions:

Spend time watching and analyzing the types of documentaries or public service announcements such as this one on the use of water bottles: <http://vimeo.com/1855327>. Pay attention to the elements, narrative, and structure of these documentaries to see how ideas are successfully communicated.

Student videos may include visual evidence such as still photographs, maps, film clips, interviews and other graphic images. Text should be used minimally--subtitles, quotes, and other highlights are appropriate. Well written narration is important. While technical and creative quality is important, it does not outweigh the need for solid historical knowledge, facts and analysis.

Clips from existing documentaries should be used sparingly; overuse or long segments of footage from a professional production is discouraged. Most importantly, student videos should present student interpretations.

The Fair Use Doctrine will allow use of materials in student productions shown at educational events (such as this middle school festival), therefore, students need not seek formal permissions. However, if the documentary is shown in non-educational settings, then permissions should be sought.

PowerPoint presentations are not considered video/films appropriate for this film festival.

Film Scoring Rubric

CATEGORY	4 Distinguished	3 Accomplished	2 Developing	1 Beginning
Objective	Video is compelling and purpose of project is clearly accomplished. Audience - appropriate for both objective and purpose of project.	Video accomplishes purpose of project. Audience appropriate for objective of project.	Purpose/Audience suggested but unclear.	Purpose/Audience of project has not been identified. Video does not match purpose.
Content	Covers topic in depth with details and examples. Subject knowledge is excellent.	Includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge appears to be good.	Includes essential information about the topic but there are 1 - 2 factual errors.	Content is minimal OR there are several factual errors.
Creativity	Superior creative skill. Exceptional level of innovation and originality.	Obvious use of imagination. Displays use of creativity, innovation and/or originality.	Slight effort was made to be innovative, imaginative, or creative.	There was no attempt at utilizing imagination/creativity or innovation.
Camera Techniques	Outstanding camera work. Varying use of shots and angles that impact look of project.	Video is focused and steady. A variety of camera techniques implemented throughout project.	Camera is occasionally out of focus or shaky. Techniques distract from the project.	Camera out of focus or shaky. Little attention paid to camera's relation to subject.
Audio/Sound	Audio is flawless; excellent balance of sound, music and ambient noise. Every precaution was taken to collect ideal sound.	Important sounds and dialogue are captured. Continuity in audio playback and integration of ambient noise/music.	Audio occasionally inaudible and/or lacks continuity. An attempt is made to ensure that quality dialogue is captured.	Little attention was paid to ensuring quality sound during the shoot. Audio inaudible.
Editing	Project flows exceptionally well. Transitions are creative and editing is of the highest quality.	Edits are unnoticeable. Transitions are not overused and reflect signs of creativity in their usage.	Edits inconsistent and/or distracting at times. Use of transitions is abrupt.	Few to no transitions. No Edits. Unnatural breaks in audio/video that distract.
Video Continuity	Integration of all elements is exceptional. Demonstrates accomplishment in video/audio/lighting techniques.	Project contains a natural flow of action. Audio/Video support the ideas that are presented. Demonstrates skill in use of video, audio, and lighting integration.	Project hard to follow. Ideas are not clearly supported through the integration of project's elements. Video/Audio out - of - sync.	Project not organized. Video/Audio not consistent with one another and detract from the production.
Lighting	Additional lighting has been used to eliminate shadows and glares. Cameras are set to the appropriate light level.	Additional lighting has been used, but may not be set up optimally. Cameras are set to the appropriate light level.	Cameras are set to appropriate light level, but no additional lighting was used when needed.	Cameras are not set to appropriate light level. Additional lighting not used when needed.